

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

SCEM-02 INT-08 FPC-01 SCI-06 NSF-04 AID-20 DRC-01

/191 W

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R 032010Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5816

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 1551

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINR TD

SUBJECT: WILLIAMS STAYS ON

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

REF: POS 1545

SUMMARY: THIS TELEGRAM REVIEWS BACKGROUND OF WILLIAMS' DECISION TO STAY ON, PREDICTS SHORT-RUN OUTLOOK FOR T&T, AND ASSESSES IMPLICATIONS FOR US POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. REVIEWING THE PAST TWO MONTHS, WE WOULD HAZARD A GUESS THAT THE FOLLOWING IS A REASONABLY ACCURATE PICTURE OF WHAT WENT ON:

2. MOODY AT BEST, ERIC WILLIAMS WAS GENUINELY DISCOURAGED AND FULLY MEANT HIS SEPTEMBER 28 THREAT TO STEP DOWN BY YEAR'S END.

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THE PASSAGE OF TIME AND A COMPLEX OF MOTIVES LED HIM TO RECONSIDER.

THESE MOTIVES RANGED FROM THE LOFTY TO THE MOST PETTY AND CERTAINLY INCLUDED CONCERN FOR HIS PLACE IN HISTORY (POS 1158), FOR CONTINUED RACIAL HARMONY AND FOR MOMENTUM IN COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN REGIONALISM, AS WELL AS HATRED FOR HUDSON-PHILLIPS. IN ABSENCE OF PUBLIC CLAMOR FOR HIM TO STAY ON, HE AND HIS SUPPORTERS SET OUT TO ARTIFICIALLY CREATE APPEARANCE OF AN OVERWHELMING DEMAND FOR HIS RETURN. IRO PLOY (POS 1411) PROVIDED A BARELY SUFFICIENT MANDATE.

3. MEANWHILE PNM FOUND ITSELF IN A QUANDARY. LARGELY A VEHICLE OF SUPPORT FOR ONE MAN, IT HAD DEGENERATED IN RECENT YEARS INTO A DEVICE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF GOODIES, SUCH AS PUBLIC OFFICE AND EMPLOYMENT. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN HUDSON-PHILLIPS AND MOHAMMED POINTED UP THE POTENTIAL FOR A RACIAL SPLIT AND DISINTEGRATION OF PARTY. SELF-INTEREST AND THE LAST MINUTE BANDWAGON EFFECT SUFFICED TO BRING ABOUT YESTERDAY'S MODERATELY EFFECTIVE SHOW OF PARTY SOLIDARITY FOR WILLIAMS.

4. THE REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMISSION IS NOW EXPECTED ABOUT THE END OF THE YEAR AS THE NEXT MAJOR EVENT ON THE NATIONAL SCENE. DISCUSSIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND COMMISSION MINORITY REPORTS WILL TAKE UP SOME MONTHS, WITH WILLIAMS EXPECTED TO TAKE A STRONG STAND AGAINST THE EXPECTED RECOMMENDATION FOR SOME FORM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. WILLIAMS HAS PROMISED GENERAL ELECTIONS AFTER A NEW CONSTITUTION IS ESTABLISHED.

5. IN THE MEANTIME, OPPOSITION PARTIES WILL BE PUTTING THEIR HOUSES IN ORDER TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS AND PERHAPS MOVING TO COMBINE FACTIONS. UNLESS WILLIAMS TRIES TO PUNISH THE HUDSON-PHILLIPS FACTION, WHICH MAKES UP CLOSE TO A MAJORITY OF ELECTED PARTY OFFICIALS, IT IS EXPECTED TO STAY IN THE PNM. AFTER ALL WILLIAMS' MACHINATIONS, FOR THE MOMENT HUDSON-PHILLIPS IS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE AS PNM LEADER.

6. THE PNM INTERNAL DISPUTE HAS LEFT UNSOLVED THE GROWING SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FACING THE GOTT. AS THE ECONOMY FOLLOWS WORLDWIDE TRENDS INTO AN INCREASING CONSUMER CRISIS, THE POWERFUL MILITANT LABOR ORGANIZATIONS ARE AGITATING FOR DRASTIC SOLUTIONS. DISLOCATIONS IN THE OIL REFINERIES OR OTHER AREAS AFFECTED BY THE ENERGY CRISIS COULD SPARK SERIOUS WORKER UNREST AT A TIME

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WHEN THE POLITICALLY POTENT SUGAR WORKERS NOW APPEAR TO BE SLIPPING FROM CONTROL OF CONSERVATIVE LEADERS.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR US: THE ENERGY CRISIS HAS UNDERLINED AGAIN THE PRIMACY OF OUR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THIS OIL AND GAS RICH COUNTRY. DEPENDING ON STANCE TAKEN BY DR. WILLIAMS WITH OIL COMPANIES AND USG, IT MAY WELL BE TO OUR SHORT-RUN ADVANTAGE THAT HE STAY ON. IN LONG RUN, HOWEVER, WILLIAMS'

REVERSAL AGAIN POSTPONES THE INEVITABLE TRANSFER OF POWER TO
A NEW POLITICAL GENERATION AND MAY MAKE IT THAT MUCH MORE
TRAUMATIC WHEN IT COMES.

8. RECENTLY WILLIAMS HAS APPEARED RELAXED AGAIN IN DEALING
WITH FOREIGNERS. WHETHER HE IS WILLING TO RESUME WITH MY
SUCCESSOR THE CLOSE, IF NOT ALWAYS HARMONIOUS, RELATIONS THAT
EXISTED WITH THIS MISSION AT ONE TIME, ONLY TIME WILL TELL.
MARSHALL

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